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RICHARD S. FINNIE: BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE
(WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NORTHERN EXPERIENCE)

After having spent the first three years of his life in Dawson City, Yukon Territory, where he was born on August 24, 1906, Richard Sterling Finnie grew up in Ottawa and became an explor a journalist, film-maker and lecturer specializing in northern Canada for twenty years (1924-1944). During the next quarter-century he filmed and wrote about people and events in many countries, but eventually gravitated back to his native northland, his first and abiding geographical and historical interest.

His father was Oswald Sterling Finnie, B.Sc., D.L.S., who served as chief mining recorder in Dawson City from 1898 until 1909, and after an interlude as inspecting engineer for the Department of the Interior, Ottawa, was in 1921 appointed director of the newly-created Northwest Territories and Yukon Branch of that department, a post he held until his retirement at the end of 1931. Richard Finnie's mother, Nelly Louise, was a daughter of Richard Roediger, founding proprietor of the Dawson Daily News, 1899-1909. She and O. S. Finnie were married in Dawson City in 1904.

Highlights of Richard Finnie's early career included five seaborne expeditions to the Eastern Canadian Arctic, the first flight ever made over the North Magnetic Pole and around King William Island, a year among the Copper Eskimos, journeys through the Mackenzie District, the first direct flight from Norman Wells to Whitehorse, and two years as northern adviser and film-maker with the civilian contractors and the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers for the building of the Alaska Highway and its related Canol Project.

Subsequently, as official historian and film producer of Bechtel Corporation, with headquarters in San Francisco, he covered in word and picture that organization's engineering and construction projects in many lands until his retirement in 1968.

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RICHARD S. FINNIE: BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE
(WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NORTHERN EXPERIENCE)

After having spent the first three years of his life in Dawson City, Yukon Territory, where he was born on August 24, 1906, Richard Sperling Finnie grew up in Oregon and became an explorer, journalist, photographer and business executive in northern Canada and Alaska. During the Great Depression he was employed by the Yukon Gold Company, Dawson, Y.T., and later as laboratory technician for the Department of Mines and Resources in Ottawa. Finnie was assigned to the Canadian Arctic Expedition of 1931-32 as photographer and journalist, and was later appointed Chief Photographer for the Canadian Arctic Expedition of 1937-38. During the period of his Dawson days, Finnie was also a stringer for the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, covering the Yukon for the Alaska Daily Press, 1928-1930, and later for the Portland Oregonian, 1930-1931. He was also a photographer for the Canadian Government in 1931, and later for the Canadian Government and Yukon Gold Company in 1934.

Highlights of Finnie's career include the seaborne expedition to the Canadian Arctic, the first flight ever made over the North Pole and around King William Island, a year among the Eskimos of Coronation Gulf, journeys through the Mackenzie District, the first commercial flight from Norman Wells to Whitehorse, and two years as northern adviser and film-maker with the civilian contractors and the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers for the building of the Alaska Highway and its related Canol Project.

Subsequently, as official historian and film producer of Bechtel Corporation, with headquarters in San Francisco, he covered in word and picture that organization's engineering and construction projects in many lands until his retirement in 1969.

Some of his Bechtel assignments were in northern locations: a refinery project in Norway, iron-ore and hydroelectric projects in Labrador, the first major Athabasca oil-sands development in northern Alberta, and Alaska's first big crude-oil pipeline and offshore tanker-loading facility in Cook Inlet.

He has lectured on northern subjects at universities and museums and under the auspices of various societies across Canada and the United States. He is the author of a half-dozen books (three on the North),* innumerable magazine articles, and the writer-director-photographer-producer of about eighty documentary and industrial films dating from 1928 to 1968.

He is an honorary member of the Yukon Order of Pioneers and a fellow of The Explorers Club and of the Arctic Institute of North America.

His home since 1951 has been in Belvedere, Marin County, California. His first wife, Alyce, a San Franciscan, who accompanied him on a couple of Arctic trips, died in 1965. His present wife, Anne, also a San Franciscan, who has also gone north with him, is a great-granddaughter of Louis Sloss, founding president of the Alaska Commercial Company, and a granddaughter of Leon Sloss, a president of the old Northern Commercial Company.

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* Lure of the North (Macay, Philadelphia, 1940), Canada Moves North (Macmillan, New York and Toronto, 1942 and 1948), Canol (Privately Printed, San Francisco, 1945).

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

RICHARD STERLING FINNIE was born in Dawson City, Y.T., 24 August 1906. Growing up in Ottawa, he became an explorer, writer, historian and film-maker specializing in the Northwest Territories and the Yukon, much of which he has covered on many journeys since 1924 besides faraway places elsewhere around the world. He is the author of numerous magazine articles and three books on the North, several on other subjects, and has produced about eighty documentary films. He is an honorary member of the Yukon Order of Pioneers and a Fellow of both The Explorers Club and The Arctic Institute of North America. Retired from Bechtel Corporation, a multinational engineering-construction organization, he resides in Belvedere, California, near San Francisco.

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